

Life of William Budge

Migrant, Citizen, Legislator, 9 years a missionary

Bishop, Postmaster, Father of 36

Mayor, Mission President

By his daughter Alta Budge Kidman, May 1934

On the first day of May 1828 – President William Budge, the subject of the sketch was born in Lanark, Lanarkshire, Scotland. He was the son of William and Mary Scott Budge. His father was of Highland Scotch ancestry and his mother came of the Scotts of Douglas, Scotland. His parents were devoted members of the Presbyterian Church and insisted upon a strict observance of religious duties by the children all of whom became quite familiar with the scripture from the enforced application to the study of them. He attended school in Scotland, but the education he gained in that way was so meager that it may truly be said that he was a self educated man. While the family were residing at Airdric my father attended school which had an enrollment of about twenty pupils varying in age from eight to fourteen or fifteen years. This school had very few conveniences, there were no blackboards, chart books, tables or chairs, they only furnishings consisting of a number of benches of the most primitive type the legs of which were driven through the planks upon which the pupils sat. My father was at this time about eight years of age, and his lessons consisted chiefly in rehearsing a few verses of the Psalms of David. The teacher was an old gentleman who talked very kindly to the boys and who kept their good will in not adopting any rigid rules of deportment.

There was within my father even in his early boyhood a strong desire to read, and with the pennies he occasionally received from his parents he would purchase some little book, containing one or more of the never to be forgotten stories such as “Jack and the Beanstalk” or “Blue Beard,” which he would read by the light from the fire-place. As he grew older his interest in learning increased and he acquired considerable general information upon historical and religious subjects.

It was while the family resided at Glasgow, during the latter part of the year 1844 that my father, who was then sixteen years of age, one day heard a man on the street reading a printed paper about the killing of Joseph Smith, the “Mormon” prophet. My father had for some time been thinking seriously about religion. He thought people should be allowed to believe as they pleased without being persecuted for it, and he felt that the killing of Mr. Smith was an unjust and cruel act. The incident was the first one to call to my fathers attention that there was a religious denomination commonly known as the “Mormon Church.” It was not until he was about twenty years of age that he was invited by a friend to attend a religious service of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. The speaker of the evening was Elder John Shields. He pondered over these teachings and the religion of his parents no longer satisfied him. He became convinced that God had again spoken from the Heavens and revealed the Gospel which had been taught by Christ and his Apostles and decided that there was but one course for him to pursue. He applied for baptism on December 31, 1848 and was baptized by Elder John McMillan. From this hour his life was to be that of a laborer in Christ’s vineyard, and almost immediately became one of its missionaries assisting as a member of the local priesthood in the branches of the Church at Glasgow. On April 20, 1851 he was called to labor as a missionary in Northumberland County, England – to use my fathers words; - “I was not going amongst strangers, to preach without purse or script.”

He was the first missionary in that section of the country. My father was often hungry, in reading his diary we find quotations as follows; - “Since I have been here I have had very little to eat. This is the second time I have been extremely hungry. Today I felt partially blind. I am very often hungry, etc.” He continued his labors in England until 1854 – when he was sent to

Switzerland. Opposition to the Church was to violent in Switzerland. That within three months he was on thirteen occasions placed under arrest and imprisoned for short periods and finally was obliged to return to England. While in prison he was treated as other prisoners – my father says; - “Our meals took very little time, as about only half as much to eat as was necessary was allowed us. Our fare consisted principally of Sauer Kraut, which had always been very repulsive to me, but which I eventually concluded was very good food.”

Upon request of Prof. Karl G. Maeser that a missionary be sent to him at Dresden in Saxony – President Franklin D. Richards then President of the European mission, called my father to Liverpool to consider the advisability of sending an elder to visit Prof. Maeser. The laws of Saxony were very rigid, and President Richards sensed that a visit to Saxony would be attended with great risk, so did not make a direct request of father to go, but, father knew from his remarks that it would please him very much to comply with Prof. Maeser’s request, so he immediately proceeded to Dresden. We have this from Prof. Maeser himself written for the *Improvement Era* of November 1899. “A few weeks after that request had been made, Elder Richards sent Elder William Budge – now president of the Bear Lake Stake, to Dresden. It was providential that such a man was the first Mormon I ever beheld, for although scarcely able to make himself understood in German, he by his winning and yet dignified personality, created an impression upon me and my family which was the Keynote to an indispensable influence which hallowed the principles he advocated.” By reason of fathers teachings Prof. Maeser applied for baptism, but as Pres. Richards as about to visit Dresden father out of request [respect] for him deferred the baptism so that he might officiate – shortly after the Baptism my father returned to England and resumed his labors there. He was continuously in the Mission field without purse or script from 1851 to 1860 when he emigrated to America, leaving England on the 10th day of May 1860 with his wife and baby boy on the sailing ship “William Tapscott” for New York. The voyage lasted six weeks. On the arrival of the ship in New York father received a communication from Apostle George Q. Cannon, who had charge of the Church immigration during the year 1860, giving him full authority and instructions to take full charge of the entire company and conduct the Saints to Florence Nebraska where they were to be outfitted for their journey across the plains, where they arrived July 4th 1860.

Before leaving Europe father had often contemplated the pleasure he would feel when honorably released from his arduous missionary labors and public responsibilities. His expectations of freedom had been somewhat interfered with, when he was required to assume charge of the saints from New York to Florence, but now that he had reached Florence he felt sure that by reason of the fact that he was entirely new to the Western country and had no knowledge of Western life or travel across the great plains he would certainly be exempt from responsibility connected with the journey from Florence to Utah. However, his hopes were not to be realized – at Florence he was unanimously sustained to conduct the Saints from Florence to Utah. He was given to assist him a man who had experienced life on the plains and who was an old frontiersman possessing a great fund of information concerning western life and travel. This man was Nephi Johnson he was true to his trust, a good and faithful assistant and advisor. The train consisted of 72 wagons all drawn by oxen with two or three exceptions where horses were used. There were also a number of loose horses, cows and young cattle. The journey occupied three months, the company arriving at Salt Lake on the 5th day of October 1860, camping on the square where the City and County building now stands. As sated before it was the last company

of the season, and one of the largest that ever crossed the plains. With the exception of two deaths, a man being shot by accident and the passing away of the little child of my father and his wife, who had been ill almost continuously since they left England. Everything connected with the journey was successfully managed to the entire satisfaction of all concerned.

Soon after arrival in Salt Lake my father went as far as North Farmington where he rented a log house of one room. The owner of the house had removed and taken the only window in the house with him. The food supply consisted of half a sack of flour, which a kind brother had put into the wagon at Bountiful. They had nothing else upon which to subsist. They were new to the country and winter was approaching. Father did all kinds of farm work and received any kind of pay that was current among early settlers. On August 7th of 1891 father took as his second wife Eliza Pritchard, a member of the company he conducted across the plains, - "Aunt Lizzie" as she was known to us all. On January 10th, 1864 President Brigham Young called father to Providence, Cache Co. to take up his residence there as Bishop. When father arrived at Providence he found the town to some extent fortified, as the Indians had been troublesome in some parts of the Valley.

Soon after his arrival in Providence and after father had found a suitable location he began to interest himself in the betterment of conditions there. With other leading men he took up the matter of surveying a townsite and laid it out into lots and the people planted orchards and made other improvements for their comfort, including the erection of a rock meeting house. On November 15, 1864 father received his certificate of citizenship and on March 25, 1865 he was appointed Postmaster. On March 23, 1866 he was commissioned assistant assessor of division 9, the district embraces what is now Bear Lake Co. Idaho, Rich Co. and Cache Co. Utah. He was appointed to the office of this work July 15, 1868, and again on July 3, 1869, and on May 14, 1868 he received a commission as Major of the 2nd Battalion infantry, 2nd regiment 1st Brigade of the Nauvoo Legion. On October 6th, 1868 he was appointed special Deputy Clerk of the third Judicial Court for Cache and Rich Counties. He was also elected School Superintendent for Cache Co., both of which offices he held in addition to the office of Assistant Assessor.

On April 5, 1868 father took as his third wife Ann Hyer (my mother), daughter of Christian and Caroline Hogan Hyer. At the conference held in Logan on the 20th day of June, President Brigham Young called father to take up his abode in Bear Lake Valley, Idaho. Father's reply was; - "Yessir, if you desire it." He was then set apart as Presiding Bishop of Rich County and instructed to take charge of all tithing business in that section of the country. The greater part of Bear Lake was then in Rich County. During the month of July 1870 father took Aunt Julia his first wife and her children to Paris Idaho. Aunt Lizzie went a little later and my mother also went later in the season. Father was a great leader and organizer and upon his arrival in Bear Lake he found the people in very poor circumstances, the winters were long and extremely cold, very little grain ripened on account of either early or late frosts, the land was covered with sage brush, no trees, either shade or fruit. Something must be done to create work and an interest in bettering conditions. In 1874 father organized a Cooperative store, giving the people a chance to take shares from one to five or more as they saw fit, buying what produce they had and freighting it into Evanston Wyoming and bringing back dry good and groceries which they could buy. There was no cash in Bear Lake at that time so they issued scrip or due bills, which they received from produce, then took the scrip back in exchange for goods. In 1876 father organized

in Nounan Valley, where they took milk cows on shares, giving one half of what cheese the cow made to each owner. In 1877 a tannery and shoe and harness shops were started and organized where they made leather shoes and harnesses. The same year 1877 a shingle mill was built where people could haul logs and get lumber and shingles for building purposes. In 1881 a tin and tailor shop was opened up, all in connection with the coop store which gave employment to 46 and opened up a way for people to use what they could produce and purchase what they required for their personal use and comfort. Father also organized choirs, bands and theatrical companies and was greatly in favor of socials and dances for the entertainment of young and old.

On May 27, 1878 he was called by President John Taylor to succeed Joseph F. Smith as president of the European mission, and shortly after proceeded to Liverpool, England, where he entered upon his new duties. My father presided in Liverpool for two and one half years returning to Bear Lake on the 6th day of November 1880.

Idaho Politics were strongly anti Mormon in those days, the first election was practically a fight between the anti-Mormons and the Mormons, at this time father made a visit to Malad the county seat, Bear Lake not being created, upon this visit a compromise between the mormons and the anti-Mormons was effected and a ticket agreed upon made up of good men of both parties was sustained without a single exception by the Mormon people. Later the county of Bear Lake was created and my father sat in the council at Boise, Idaho.

In 1888 father paid a visit to Washington D.C. and while there called upon President Grover Cleveland and laid before him the true conditions with respect to the conduct of federal officials and Idaho towards the Mormon people.

My father, by reason of his constant and faithful labors in behalf of the people over whom he presided became known as the representative Mormon of Idaho. During all these years he devoted much time and means in the welfare of the Mormon people. In common with many others he suffered much unrest in consequence of the persistant efforts made by the United States deputy marshals to arrest him on account of his alleged marriage relations. But he never left his field of duty and labor during the years of persecution. He was arrested in Ogden and stood trial in Blackfoot but was acquitted. In all the trials the people passed through father stood by them using his ability and personal influence to silence opposition and remove obstacles. In June 1899 my father sat for the third time in the upper house o Idaho's Legislature, the people having honored him by again electing him as their Senator. He was instrumental in obtaining appropriations for schools and roads and many other things for the benefit of the people. He was held in high esteem by his senatorial co-laborers who paid great respect to the experience of "the sage of the senate" as he was called by them. On January 14, 189 father appeared before the Committee on Territories of the United States Senate in behalf of the Mormon people, in opposition to the admission of Idaho as a state, under the purposed constitution which contained what was commonly called the "Test Oath" prohibiting any person to vote or hold office or act as a juror and who belonged to the Mormon Church. Prejudice was so strong that the Mormons of Idaho were disfranchised, but later the franchise was restored and the people again took part in political affairs. He also appeared as a witness in the Smoot investigation.

After residing in Bear Lake during 36 years, he was called to the office of the Logan Temple which position he held until a very short time before his death.

Father himself, though one of the kindest of men was always a believer in order and discipline. It has been advocated by some that strict discipline tends to drive children away from their parents. This course was fathers and as a result his children without exception entertained for him the deepest affection.

Father had three wives – Aunt Julia, his first wife whom he married in London in 1856, she was the mother of 12 children.

Aunt Lizzie, whom he married in Salt Lake in 1861 one year after coming to Utah and who was the mother of 9 children.

My mother Ann Hyer Budge whom he married in 1868 and who was the mother of 15 living children.

My fathers family members to; -

Children	36
Grand children	104
Great grand children	115
Great great grand children	2

Grand total of	257
----------------	-----

Marilla Buist Hist.